

**Scotland's Strategy for the Learning
Provision for Children and Young People
with Complex Additional Support Needs 2017-2026**



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please Note this form **must** be completed and returned with your response.

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

- Individual
 Organisation

Full name or organisation's name

Convention of Scottish Local Authorities	0131 474 9317
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Phone number

Address

Verity House 19 Haymarket Yards Edinburgh

Postcode

EH12 5BH

Email

laurac@cosla.gov.uk

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

- Publish response with name
 Publish response only (without name)
 Do not publish response

Information for organisations:

The option 'Publish response only (without name)' is available for individual respondents only. If this option is selected, the organisation name will still be published.

If you choose the option 'Do not publish response', your organisation name may still be listed as having responded to the consultation in, for example, the analysis report.

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

- Yes
 No

Consultation questions

Scotland's Strategy for the Learning Provision for Children and Young People with Complex Additional Support Needs 2017-20206 aims to support improved outcomes for children and young people with complex additional support needs through strategic commissioning of national services; with particular focus on the provision of education. While this strategy also recognises the critical role played by social services and health in supporting educational outcomes, the strategy is set within the context of The Additional Support for Learning Act 2004.

STRUCTURE

- 1) Is this structure correct? Does the content of the document flow in a logical order?
- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please explain your response:

- 2) Does the structure help the reader to follow the strategy effectively
- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please explain your response:

The structure seems unbalanced with most emphasis on the strategy's vision, aims and objectives, which are clearly defined. What is less clear is the steps that will be taken to achieve these. Further development of more detail within the body of the strategy would be useful.

CONTENT

Section 1. Our Vision, Aim and Objectives

Section 1 provides information on the vision, aim and objectives of the strategy.

- 3) Do you think the aims of this Strategy and the four objectives are the right ones to achieve the Scottish Government's purpose of improving outcomes for children and young people with complex additional support needs through strategic commissioning of services?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please explain your response and provide any relevant evidence.

Section 2. Why we need Strategic Commissioning for Learners with Complex Additional Support Needs?

- 4) Within the context of The Doran Review recommendations – do you agree with the explanation of why we need Strategic Commissioning for national provision/services for learners with complex additional support needs?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please explain your response:

Integrated Children's Services and the services and supports within a child's community should be considered in the strategy, as it is important that these are coordinated with any strategically commissioned services accessed to ensure a holistic approach, in line with the principles of GIRFEC, to meeting the needs of children and young people.

- 5) The 'Scope of Services to be commissioned' on page 8 relate to education, care and health, research and training and is informed by the Doran Review recommendations and the National Needs Analysis, which was completed in 2015. Can you please comment on any services within those headings which you would particularly wish to see featured here? Please tell us if you think it should exclude any aspects or include any others?

Comments:

Education:

There will always be a need for education provision that can also support the health and or care needs of some children and young people. The aim of local authorities will always be to provide local services for children with complex needs where this is appropriate and in the interest of the child. It is important that the services providing education, health and care support are complementary and coordinated and take into account the views and wishes of the child and family. We are keen to support the ongoing development of services which can be flexible in meeting the complex needs of some learners. We recognise the need for and value national services where needs are very complex and affect only a small

number of children, however the local connection is vital in maintaining relationships and community support and to ensure when they leave education there are opportunities and support for further learning, training, employment or other options that fit with the young person and their family's ambitions. Considering transitions, in education, care and health, and planning for these in advance with young people and their families, is vital.

Care:

Considered above

Health:

Considered above

Research:

There is a lack of information on the long term outcomes in terms of achievement and attainment of children who have complex additional support needs, and the factors which influence these. There is also a lack of information on the experiences of children, families and those working to provide education, care and support.

We need more information about the children and young people collectively who are attending the seven grant-aided special schools and three education support services that receive recurrent funding from the Scottish Government, in order to consider how their needs are currently met and how children with similar needs could be supported in future.

Consideration of likely future trends in terms of complex additional support needs will also be beneficial in service planning.

Training:

Staff who are supporting those with complex additional support needs must feel adequately trained, competent and confident in the tasks they are being asked to carry out. Training in specialist healthcare support areas for those working in education should be arranged in partnership with the NHS, though it is recognised that the third sector often has an important role to play in delivery of training on specific conditions. It is also important to consider the learning and development needs of all staff supporting the learning of children and young people, across all children's services. There is a wide range of training on offer, however the resources, funds and cover to enable staff to participate in this is often a challenge. Given successive years of cuts to Local Authority budgets, the ability to make training opportunities available has been restricted. Any requirement for more staff training will require to be fully funded by Scottish Government. We are not convinced that more training packages require development, though the mechanisms for learning and development, including training delivery does require focus.

Section 3. 10 Year Strategy

This provides detail on the strategy for the first 10 years on the proposed approach to strategic commissioning of national provision/services for children and young people with complex additional support needs.

- 6) What are your views on the National Commissioning Groups proposal that the first phase of strategic commissioning will focus on pathfinder (testing) activity on training, development and research? Are there any particular areas of training which should be focussed on?

Comments:

We would recommend a review of the training available alongside the experiences and needs of children and young people, and their families to identify if there are any gaps and clarify what those are. We would then recommend a focus on how this can be funded and resourced and targeted at the most appropriate audience.

- 7) For the purposes of this document the National Improvement Framework drivers have been adapted and therefore reflect particular concerns related to children with complex additional support needs? Do you have any suggestions for additions or alternative wording which should be included? Please set it out against the relevant heading below.

Comments:

Service Leadership:

Education Services:

Practitioner Professionalism:

Parental Engagement:

Assessment of Children’s Progress:

The strategy requires more detail on the trial of a range of assessment models for children and young people with additional support needs.

Service Improvement:

It is unclear what is meant by “The research to look at both at internal collaboration between education, care and health staff within a localised setting and also the wider local authority scene (Education and Social Work Services).” The word “internal” is confusing when the first refers to a number of bodies (Local Authorities, NHS Boards and Integrated Joint Boards as well as any third sector agencies providing services) and the second to services within a Local Authority (or Integrated Joint Board).

Performance Information:

8) Do you agree that the Governance arrangements detailed on page 14 are appropriate? If not, what else should be included?

- Yes
- No
- Don’t know

Please explain your response:

General

9) In relation to the overall 10 Year Strategy - are there any areas missing, requiring strengthening, or which are not required and could be removed?

- Yes
- No
- Don’t know

Please explain your response:

The strategy lacks reference the principles of GIRFEC and we would recommend the strategy considers how it could be better aligned.

In light of the Education Governance Review, a number of revisions will be required within the draft strategy. Children and young people with additional support needs largely go unmentioned in the "Next Steps" document which is very concerning in the context of inclusion and ensuring excellence and equity in education. We are committed to ensuring all children and young people are supported and included to fulfil their potential in education and any separation of education provision from local authorities could compromise this.

- 10) Are there any general comments you would wish to make about '**Scotland's Strategy for the Learning Provision for Children and Young People with Complex Additional Support Needs 2017-2026**'

The strategy must be considered in the wider context of local authority budgets and financial pressures across all services. While strategic commissioning of services may support the aim of improving outcomes for children and young people with complex additional support needs, these services cannot be considered in isolation as these children and young people are likely to be accessing additional services which will be affected by a reduction to local authority funding.

Thank you. Please send with your respondent information sheet to:

Email address:

or

Scotland's Strategy for the Learning Provision for Children and Young People with
Complex Additional Support Needs 2017-2026 – Consultation
Support and Wellbeing Unit
Area 2C South
Scottish Government
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

DRAFT